

Dear All

I thought I would share the update below from Stuart Jarvis at Hampshire County Council on the Household Waste & Recycling Centre booking system. I know this has been the source of frustration for some and the explanation below may be helpful.

Members,

I know that you have been getting a lot of comments and questions from constituents about the new HWRC Booking system – and I recognise that whilst we have effectively solved the nuisance traffic queue issues, we now have a different frustration with residents not always able to secure a booking to visit an HWRC when they wish to. Whilst we will do all we can to address this, while we have any social distancing restrictions in place (and we are awaiting guidance on the latest announcements this week in relation to HWRC operations) sites will always operate at below pre-covid levels. The current national rules mean we are operating at around 25% capacity, and therefore demand, which is always higher at this time of year, is likely to be in excess of available capacity.

The booking system has now been in place for 12 days, and we have been able to monitor its operation and site useage to inform a review of the arrangements, based on evidence rather than conjecture. We have also been able to take into account the comments we have received, and I am grateful to Members who have shared suggestions for changes and improvements with us. The Waste Team have given careful consideration to these, alongside the evidence we have from the sites and the system, and we are now making some further adjustments to the booking arrangements.

From next week onwards we will begin to increase the number of available slots at each site by enabling more visits to be booked in each 30 minute window. I know that there has been concern and criticism over the use of the 30 minute window, but this is based on a misconception of how the system actually works – we do not limit the bookings to 1 visitor for each parking bay per half hour, and we will now increase this further – effectively meaning we will accommodate an additional 5,000 visits per week across the network.

I am aware that some residents have been frustrated by not being able to book a slot, and find it inconvenient to need to repeatedly log in or use the phone system to try to get a slot. We wanted to avoid the issues raised in other areas when booking systems were introduced, and all slots were immediately booked up weeks ahead, so our system was limited initially to 48 hours ahead and slots were released in tranches to allow timely bookings to be made. We will therefore be revising the system to allow some slots to be booked up to 7 days ahead, but will keep releasing additional slots progressively up to the day before – thereby allowing greater flexibility for different user's requirements. Whilst it is not a major issue, to date we are seeing a small percentage (c 2%) of 'no shows' in booked slots, which is obviously a frustration for those trying unsuccessfully to book slots.

I hope this information is helpful – and I attach a link to a [press release](#) announcing these changes.

Regards

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